

Message Text

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FM AMCONSUL PALERMO

TO AMEMBASSY ROME

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E.O. 11652 N/A

TAGS: PINT, IT

SUBJ: THE REGIONAL ASSEMBLY MAY BE ELECTING A COMMUNIST PRESIDENT

REF: PALERMO 0454

1. PCI PANCRAZIO DE PASQUALE IS LIKELY TO BECOME NEXT PRESIDENT OF THE SICILIAN REGIONAL ASSEMBLY WITH THE FORMAL CONSENT OF THE DC, ALTHOUGH IT IS ANTICIPATED THAT SEVERAL DC MEMBERS WILL DESERT THE PARTY VOTE.
2. FROM THE START, THE COMMUNISTS ANNOUNCED THEIR CANDIDACY TO THE PRESIDENCY OF THE REGIONAL ASSEMBLY, RUMINATING OVER THIS AND THE
N
ACCEPTING A DC PROPOSAL TO REDUCE THE PRESIDENT'S TENURE FROM FIVE TO TWO AND HALF YEARS TO PERMIT A CHRISTIAN DEMOCRAT AND A COMMUNIST TO ALTERNATE SITTING IN THE ASSEMBLY PRESIDENT'S CHAIR. THE COMMUNISTS HAVE NOW ACCEPTED THE SOCIALIST PROPOSAL TO ELECT A NEW PRESIDENT EVERY YEAR SO THAT THE FIVE PARTIES OF THE "CONFRONTO" (DC, PCI, PSI, PSDI, PRI) COULD SHARE IN THE PRESIDENCY IN THE FIVE-YEAR LEGISLATURE.
3. THE LATEST DEVELOPMENT HOWEVER IS AN AGREEMENT AMONG THE LOCAL DC BARONS TO ABANDON THEIR CLAIM TO THE ASSEMBLY PRESIDENCE AND SUPPORT WHOMEVER THE MAJORITY CHOOSES, MOST PROBABLY PCI

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DE PASQUALE. THIS HAS THROWN THE DC ASSEMBLY FRESHMEN INTO A STATE

OF SHOCK AS THE REALITY OF SICILIAN POLITICS BEGINS TO DAWN
WITH THE REALIZATION THAT IT IS STILL THE OLD LEADERS WHO CALL
THE SHOTS. THE FANFANI, SOMETIMES JOINED BY THE FRIENDS
OF RUFFINI, ARE ALONE IN OPENLY OPPOSING A PREORDAINED COMMUNIST
PRESIDENCE.

4. /COMMENT/: THE IMPASSE AT THE REGION IS REFLECTED ON BOTH THE
PALERMO CITY AND PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATIONS KEEPING THEM IN A STATE
OF LIMBO UNTIL SOME AGREEMENT IS REACHED WITH THE COMMUNISTS.
WHETHER ONE LIKES IT OR NOT, THE COMMUNISTS ARE BECOMING MORE FIR-
MLY SEATED IN THE SADDLE OF SICILIAN REGIONAL POLITICS DEMANDING
THEIR FULL SHARE OF THE PORK BARREL, FOR SO LONG A PREROGATIVE
OF THE DC. AS FOR THE PSI, ITS SCHIZOID BEHAVIOR IS NOT WORTHY
OF COMMENT. CHIAVARINI

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